

A Study on Contribution of public libraries in the teaching and learning process: Kandy District

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Abstract

Learning and teaching are two processes. By combining these two processes, a person armed with knowledge makes valuable contributions to society, fostering progress in various fields. Learning is also a basic human need but due to the human incapability of learning everything alone, Public Libraries can be introduced as a community institution that supports the three areas of formal, informal and non-formal education. That is, public libraries can be further introduced as a type of institution that provides information services to people of all ages, from young to old. The world considers educational development as a priority and supporting formal and informal educational activities can be stated as an objective of public libraries. However, there is limited literature regarding the impact of libraries on the learning process. The problem is to study how public libraries in Sri Lanka can enhance their timely contributions to the teaching learning-process in Sri Lanka. The study aims to determine the benefits that readers get through the public library. As it is very difficult to cover all public libraries in Sri Lanka, 104 persons were selected from four public libraries in the Kandy district under a random systematic sample. Qualitative research methodology was used for this study, and a questionnaire method was used to collect primary data. The objective of the study is to identify the contribution of public librarians to formal, informal and non-formal education, examine their contributions to the teaching and learning process, investigate the social mission to the learning and teaching process taking

place in public libraries and to identify barriers and solutions to the teaching- learning process within the public libraries. The findings highlighted that public libraries make a significant contribution to the learning process and that the teaching process progresses at a slower pace. According to the findings, a minimum of 10% is contributed to the teaching process while 55% support the learning process. This study also identified that public librarians contribute about 65% of formal, informal and non-formal education. Libraries support unemployed people to think differently in diverse ways but lack of technical knowledge and lack of understanding of library specialization among the public library staff were identified as major obstacles in the learning and teaching process. This study suggested that staff in collaboration with public libraries, school libraries and other educational institutions should be equipped with technical knowledge to provide services using new technology in public libraries.

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